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1992/11/30

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BEIJING 038227

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PHUM, CH
SUBJECT: 1989 DETAINEE BAO ZUNXIN LET OUT ON PROBATION

1. --- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. AFTER EXPRESSING CONTRITION FOR HIS
ACTIONS IN 1989 WHICH LED TO A 1991 CONVICTION FOR
COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY CRIMES, INTELLECTUAL BAO ZUNXIN
WAS REPORTEDLY RELEASED ON PROBATION ON NOVEMBER 25.
THE XINHUA STORY ON THIS NEWS WAS PUBLISHED ON THE
FRONT PAGE OF THE LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY, AN
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OBVIOUS SIGN THE PRC WANTED OUTSIDERS TO TAKE NOTE OF
BAO'S RELEASE.

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END SUMMARY.

3. FORMER MAGAZINE EDITOR AND PHILOSOPHER AT THE
CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES BAO ZUNXIN WAS
REPORTEDLY RELEASED ON PROBATION ON NOVEMBER 25. BAO
WAS ON THE LIST OF PRISONERS OF CONCERN TO THE U.S.
WHICH FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
SCHIFTER CONVEYED TO CHINESE AUTHORITIES IN DECEMBER
1990. IN EARLY 1991, BAO WAS SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS
IMPRISONMENT FOR COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA AND
AGITATION IN THE SPRING OF 1989. IT IS UNCLEAR WHEN

BAO WAS ORIGINALLY DETAINED; ASSUMING A SUMMER 1989 START FOR HIS DETENTION, BAO WOULD HAVE SERVED ABOUT TWO THIRDS OF HIS SENTENCE.

4. NEWS OF BAO'S RELEASE WAS CONTAINED IN A XINHUA STORY PUBLISHED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NOVEMBER 26 EDITION OF THE LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, THE CHINA DAILY. ACCORDING TO THE XINHUA STORY, THE BEIJING INTERMEDIATE COURT CONCLUDED THAT, IN VIEW OF HIS REPENTENCE FOR HIS ACTIONS IN 1989, BAO HAD MET THE CONDITIONS FOR RELEASE ON PROBATION PRESCRIBED BY CHINA'S CRIMINAL LAW. THE LANGUAGE WAS REMINISCENT OF A XINHUA REPORT AFTER BAO'S 1991 TRIAL WHICH SAID THAT BAO HAD EXPRESSED CONTRITION FOR HIS ACTIONS AND HAD THEREFORE RECEIVED A LIGHTER PUNISHMENT.

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5. FOREIGN HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS HAVE SAID THAT THE 55 YEAR OLD BAO WAS REPORTEDLY IN VERY POOR HEALTH, SUFFERING FROM BOTH A HEART CONDITION AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, AND HAD TWICE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE. EVIDENTLY WITH AN EYE TO THESE REPORTS, THE CHINA DAILY STORY CONTAINED AN ALLEGED QUOTE FROM BAO STATING THAT "I WAS GIVEN PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT EACH TIME WHEN I FELL ILL. WHAT IMPRESSED ME MOST IS THAT MY DIGNITY WAS RESPECTED."

6. COMMENT. PUBLISHING THE XINHUA REPORT ON BAO'S PROBATION ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE CHINA DAILY WAS A TRANSPARENT SIGN THAT PRC AUTHORITIES WANTED OUTSIDERS TO NOTE THE RELEASE. [

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